Warren Said To Have Had Plots Report

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Associated Press

A former head of the Secret Service confirms that the late Chief Justice Earl Warren once told him he learned of U.S. plots to kill Cuba's Fidel Castro, but not until three years after the Warren Commission had concluded its investigation into the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

In an interview Monday night, James J. Rowley, who retired in 1973 as director of the Secret Service, also confirmed that he had passed the information on to the FBI in a memorandum to then-Director J. Edgar Hoover.

Earlier Monday, well-informed sources reported that the Senate intelligence committee has obtained a copy of that memo.

Rowley, vacationing in Florida, said the information had been provided to Warren by an unidentified source at a meeting arranged by the late columnist Drew Pearson.

Rowley was unable to confirm specifics of the memo, saying: "I can't recall the exact words of the text."

The memo provides the first evidence that Warren, who headed the investigation which concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in killing Kennedy, ever learned of the CIA plots to kill Castro. Rowley's memo was written in 1967, three years after the Warren commission published its conclusions.

Columnist Jack Anderson, who said he also has a copy of memo, said Monday that Rowley mistakenly told Hoover that Warren also had learned from the source that Castro ordered Kennedy's death in retaliation for the attempts on his own life.

Anderson, a former partner of Pearson's, said the source had direct after-the-fact knowledge of the CIA plots but was only speculating when he told Warren about a possible Castro retaliation.

Rowley said only, "We tried to do it [the memo] as was presented to us" by Warren.

Anderson described the contents of the memo to the Associated Press in an interview Monday after the Las Vegas Sun reported that a secret report in the hands of the Senate committee documented the fact that Castro had ordered Kennedy's assassination and probably that of his brother, Robert.

It could not be determined immediately whether the memo described by Anderson and the report cited by the Sun were the same document.

Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), chairman of the Senate intelligence committee, said the Sun report seemed to involve information published previously in a September, 1963, AP dispatch from Havana quoting Castro as saying: "U.S. leaders should think that if they are aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders they themselves will not be safe."